

**Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections**

**Guide to Collection**

**Gompertz, Kate R., Photographer**

**Kate R. Gompertz Photograph Collection, 1895-1903**

**PCA 016**

46 photographs: b&w

Processed By: Staff

**Biographical Note**

The Gompertz family came to Alaska in 1895 or 1896. Charles William Gompertz was in charge of building canneries for the Pacific Steam Whaling Co. (later the Alaska Packers). He remained to act as superintendent of the one at Kenai until September 1903 when an arsonist set fire to the cannery causing a total loss.

**Scope and Contents Note**

These pictures taken by Dr. Kate R. Gompertz were mounted on the pages of an old Chinese account book, and most of them were taken with an old 4 x 5 camera. They were presented to the Alaska State Museum in 1968 by Ruth Gompertz Watson and transferred to the Alaska Historical Library photograph collection in July 1975.

**Inventory**

1. Gompertz home at Kenai. [People standing in front of house are: left to right] Mr. Robert Morgan, Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Gompertz and Mrs. Taggard (her sister)
2. Mrs. Robert Morgan and cubs. (wife of nearby cannery supt)
3. Dr. Kate Gompertz. Lake near Kenai. [Dr. Gompertz seated on a log fence]
4. Dr. Kate R. Gompertz as a young college student. [with] Ruth Gompertz Watson aged 3, entrance to company store. Coaster made by roustabout, solid copper wheels, year 1902. [Also in the picture is a small Indian boy]

5. My first picture. North end - Wood Island. [View of a stream with trees lining the shore]
6. Charles William Gompertz, 1896. [Full length portrait of Mr. Gompertz wearing a fur jacket, heat pants and boots with fur trimmed mittens]
7. Mr. Meurns of San Francisco, Mr. Nelson, U.S. Agricultural agent. [Standing between the men is a woman, presumably Mrs. Gompertz.]
8. Ruth Gompertz Watson, aged 3 with doll, Nadia, named for playmate, daughter of the Russian priest.
9. Beech (bark) woods.
10. Front of Gompertz home on bluff above cannery at Kenai, 1899. [3 people are on porch of house. Cyanotype (blue) finish]
11. Picnic near Kenai. Mrs. Rob't. Morgan, Mrs. Gompertz, Mr. Morgan, \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_, Mr. Gompertz, Miss Nell Taggard. [Picnicers are seated on large rocks.]
12. Bridge across creek on way to lake near Kenai. [Bridge is a plank of wood over a small stream]
13. Barn at Kenai, back of our house. [Small log building]
14. Rear view of Gompertz home at Kenai. Chicken coop and veg. garden.
15. Kenai Indian Village [One small boy standing in front of one building with racks of drying fish in front of that building and another]
16. Low tide at Kenai cannery. Superintendent's white cottage by flagpole. [The largest of the cannery buildings has Kenai PSW Co. (Pacific Steam Whaling Co.) on the front.]
17. Cutting shed, Kenai. [View of shed, nearby dock and a small boat]
18. Mr. Martin, Mrs. Gompertz, Mr. Gompertz at Kasilof. 1902. [Three adults and a child with several buildings in background]
19. Charles W. Gompertz hunting in the woods back of Kenai.
20. Kasilof 1903. Back row: Mr. Nelson,, Mrs. Noble \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_. Mrs. Rob't. Morgan, Mrs. C.W. Gompertz, Mrs. Mearns, Miss Annie Foster, Mr. Brownell (the school teacher). Front row: Mr. Morgan \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_, Mrs. Brownell, Charles W. Gorrpertz and Ruth Gompertz Watson, aged . [Group of 15 people, not all identified]
21. Cemetary (Russian) at Kenai. [One grave enclosed in a wooden fence and a wooden Russian Orthodox Church.]

22. Cannery across the creek from Kenai. [One building with a woman sitting in the doorway.]
23. Salmon trap at Kenai. [View of the trap with fish and one man in attendance.]
24. Approach to [diamond] shaped salmon trap, 3 miles from mouth of Kenai River.
25. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gompertz; family of Russian priest Bardofsky. [Group of 8 people on the porch of a house]
26. The Sound [view of water and mountains]
27. Bridge across stream to other cannery. [Small wooden foot bridge]
28. Mr. Robert Morgan Superintendent of Cannery at Kasilof. [Mr. Morgan is sitting on a porch holding a hmm skull.]
29. Indian village at Kenai. [View of several small buildings with lines of drying fish]
30. *Duxbury* at anchor [In left center with dock buildings in foreground]
31. Bidarkee crossing the sound. [Two men in a boat. Cyanotype (blue) finish.]
32. Flag pole in front of store and mess hall at Kenai. [Group of buildings in center of picture]
33. Largest span of horns (over 6 feet) to that date. [an\_displaying a moose rack]
- 34 - 40. San Francisco to Kenai, 1902 [Aboard the] *S.S. Excelior* [*Excelsior*] [Miscellaneous views of activities and scenery taken during the trip<sup>7</sup>]
41. Indians in Kenai Village. [Group of 6 people including 3 children. Log cache in background]
42. Log house - Kenai bluff. [Small log cache behind house]
43. Moose crossing the sound at Kenai. [Silhouette of two moose. Cyanotype (blue) finish]
44. Lord Lister, Mr. Cowan, Ruth. British Lord who camped with his secretary in our yard preparing to hunt moose. [Two men and a little girl (Ruth) beside one of 2 tents]
45. Near Kenai. [Group of three men and several dogs standing in front of three tents. Ground is snow covered]
46. Kenai Village (wooden buildings on either side of a muddy street; horse grazing at left).